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“LOVE, A LA MODE:”

A SLIGHT SLAP AT
THE NEAT LITTLE ELOPEMENT,
AT TORONTO.
A VERY MORAL DISSERTATION.

“My verdict for the White Rose side.”—SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON, CANADA WEST:

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PART I.

AN EPISTLE

FROM THE

FAIR MARY ANNE,

TO HER

AUNT IN THE COUNTRY.

• LOVE, A LA MODE.

Upper Tendom is thrilled by a wondrous
commotion,

The flutter of gossip and scandal is
heard ;

“ Sweet sixteen ” is seized with a tremb-
ling emotion,

A wail greets the downfall of Fashion’s
gay bird !

Dear Aunty, the Captain who often I
spoke of

In letters to you as being such a sweet
creature—

A model of neatness, good manners and
rank,

(Though I changed my opinion so soon
as he broke off

The little flirtation which he and I had,
For I hate to make love just to suit a
man's prank ;

In fact I'd have died had it been a civil-
lian—

His position the highest—his fortune—
a million !)

Well—to cut matters short—the Captain
has cleared

With a simpering female, just on
eighteen—

An heiress—no beauty—a passable lass,
Just fit for—allow the expression—AN
ASS !

The Captain—I formerly told you—was
feared

By his comrades in arms and his
rivals in love.

The Ensigns were “no where”—Lieuten-
ants were naught—

With eloquent missiles the Conqueror
fought,

Using no fists as a weapon of war,
(In this plebeian manner no gentleman
fights ;)

And the Captain one evening thus
candidly swore,

He believed in retreating on very dark
nights,

As muscular feats were a terrible bore !

The first night on which Sassey whilst
here met Miss Lavish,

I was sitting quite near them at Tal-
lowhide's ball ;

The Captain was full of soft whispers
and graces ;

(I could fathom this matter by
watching their faces)--

His conduct was exquisite, tender, and
knavish,

And I heard with my own ears, the
saucy girl call

Him the handsomest man she had seen
at the ball

I blushed for my dignity—this to his
face!

Sufficient to herald eternal disgrace!

He grew bolder, caressing her hand
in his own,

And whispered, “I’ll give you my
heart as a loan,

To see how you’ll keep it;” while she
in return

Said—“I’ll keep it forever;” I felt my
cheeks burn!

At that moment the gallant young
Captain Allears

Tripped up to implore me to dance
the next sett,

Or he'd "dwown all the guests in the
room with his te-ahs"—

I consented, and left the poor Captain
in net!

I know, dearest Aunty, that temptation
oft

Lingers where melody, soothing and
soft,

Floats on the ear with a trembling
bliss,

And sound of rich gaiety, pleasure and
joy,

Combine to make earth appear free
from alloy.

I know that the pale stars of Heaven
have power,

A strange magic strength to allure us
to love;

To make us believe life a fair blooming
flower

As sacred and pure as the glories
above!

And thus in surveying those forms in
that room

All my rapture of soul passed away
into gloom.

So very mysterious—so very—well, you
see,

If I go on to describe—it will answer to
jealousy!

Well, resuming my seat with an air of
fatigue,

I could not but notice the Captain and
she

Who sat by his side; for they both seemed
to be

Equally smitten and equally sure

That the ripening passion would always
endure.

A number of eyes were inspecting them
now,
And I noticed old ladies—yes, those who
had daughters,
Gaze on the two with such very strange
looks,
That I inwardly blushed ; though the Cap-
tain's calm brow
Retained its composure—his whiskers and
hair
Presenting the self-same immaculate air—
As he leant with soft confidence over her
chair,
Conversing on flowers, foreign countries,
and books.
Just then Mrs. Peachblossom said to a
neighbor,
“ The Captain don't seem to grow tired of
labor—
He'll retain that girl's heart in his faithless
possession.”

Until it's convenient to seek for a fresh
one."

Her friends on the left appeared very
much pleased,

And Mrs. P.'s satire each minute increased ;
Indeed I considered it almost a miracle
That the dropsical lady did not grow hysterical.

This continued without intermission,
until I

Concluded that Mrs. P.'s language was
silly ;

So when Captain Allears laid claim to my
hand

I gladly forsook this gossiping band.

Shall I tell you of all the gay drives and
soft meetings

Which followed the night of the glorious
ball ?

Shall I tell of the tender significant greet-
ings—

The coy invitations—the hour to call ?
Shall I tell of the missives—exchanging of
pictures—

How hearts in return appeared permanent
fixtures ?

Shall I tell how the dandies and belles of
the city

Gazed on the flirtation with well-assumed
pity ;

How Miss Gayboots expressed herself
wholly disgusted,

And vowed that till then she had never
mistrusted

The rich Captain's honor, or question'd his
right

To mingle in circles as high as polite !

Every one wonder'd—a good many sneer'd,
The ladies indignantly turned up their
noses—
Or pouted their lips to the size of spring
roses ;
The “subjects,” however, would drive and
would talk
Though the whole of creation had been
at their heels ;
They went to the Theatre, flirted and
danced
From the giddiest waltz to the gayest of
reels—
Nature herself was amazed—and entranced
With the festive young couple who never
appeared
To notice sly whispers or pay much atten-
tion
To stories of scandal unworthy of mention.

Dear Aunty, its really a matter for wonder
That those who lay claim to be leaders
of fashion

Should glory in pulling good manners
asunder,

Encouraging those who spread gossip
and scandal

Instead of contemning and laying the
lash on!

I truly believe that more evil finds vent
From the mouths of the "upper-ten"—
those who can cook

The vilest sensations by means of a look;
Whose minds, by their living, are easily
bent

To favor the cause which seems safest to
handle.

Those gold-blinded hypocrites—puff'd with
pretence—

Their very high standard, importance,
and pow'r,

Who scorn the true principle moulded by
 sense,
And nip honor's bud ere it blooms to a
 flower.

There's Flora Macfarlane, society's belle—
 Caressed by the fashion and "ton" of
 the city,
Whose dresses and rings, and frivolty tell
 So much in her favor; she's clever and
 witty
And judges esteem her decidedly pretty;
Still no one is really in love with Miss
 Flora,
She numbers admirers; no special adorer
Is found at her shrine, for that cold selfish
 heart
Knows not the true rapture which love
 may impart.
No story of gossip is lost on her ear;

No rumor which she in her rounds will
not hear,

For she lives to spread scandal's most
pertinent curse,

By the strength of her tongue and the
strings of her purse.

Who could tell by the clasp of that
hand the deceit,

The falsehood of life, and the sin and
the pride?

Who could pierce through that smile to
the heart's deep retreat;

And fathom the follies that therein
abide?

Who could tell by the frank and dis-
passionate air—

The delicate carriage—the beautiful
face—

That the flame of true virtue had
vanished from there,

And the soul was not perfect in
Heavenly grace?

Ah! few know that only the classical
form

In redolent calmness remains to be
seen ;

The angelic mind could not brave the
world's storm,

And emerge from temptation in beauty
serene :—

And the tottering beggar who stoops to
receive

The alms which Miss Flora is pleased
to bestow,

Looks up, and in rapture, can scarcely
believe,

That a being so beautiful lingers below.

Thus from highest to lowest, the world
can deceive

By an exquisite form and a dazzling
show.

I know you will smile at my earnest
address,

Which startles myself—this I freely
confess—

Though it is not the cant of a crusty
old maid,

Whom society's mandate has cast in
the shade ;

Nor is it the grumbling epistle which
burns,

With sentences moulded in passion or
spleen ;

Cringingly servile and bitter by turns,
For whatever I pen, dearest Aunty, I
mean.

Society's manners are easiest reformed
By those whom its roseate pleasures
have warned,

Who, possessing an infinite knowledge
and skill,

Can prune these shortcomings and follies
at will !

Well, leaving the failings of Fashion at
large,

And giving her vot'ries an honest discharge,

Allow me to turn to the primitive
cause

Of my virtuous discourse on Etiquette's
laws.

The Queen City was thunder-struck—
Gossip now told,

How the maiden had flown with the
Captain so bold;

How that delicate girl, without license
or bann,

Had eloped with a dashing and wealthy
young man.

The milliner's stared; they had scented
afar,
The day when Toronto's most promising
star,
Would prepare for a bridal—and then,
with success,
Their plebeian fingers would fashion her
dress;
And the tailors, in sorrow, droop'd over
work,
The dreams of the future transform'd
into mist;
The elopement produced the ninth part
of a jerk
At their heart-strings—the poor fellows
couldn't resist,
A few imprecations on one who would
thrust 'em
Away from his door to give Yankees
his custom:
And the jewellers too—those artists of
gold,

Shook their heads in despair — for
their wisdom had built,
The most wonderful castles in diamond
and gilt,
But instead of selling—the dealers were
sold.

Now, there's no earthly reason why I
should relate,
All that Scandal and Gossip were
ready to tell;
The man and the maiden had chosen
their fate
In the hour of temptation, and —
human-like—fell!
It is not for mortals to centre the
blame
On one or the other; the venomous
flame

Of sin has left furrows and scars on
each heart,
Which are moulded by Error — though
hidden by Art!
Still, I feel no compassion for one who
would dare
To subject her sex to a blot of dis-
grace;
Who'd allow the eighth part of a
dandified stare,
Without teaching the lord of Creation
his place!
“Woman's Rights” in the social scale
need much reform,
And, though not a Bloomer, I know
just the line,
Over which a brazen-faced being may
breathe;
And I find that where plumage appears
to be fine,
There often dwells something suspicious
beneath—

And the longer the face and graver the
eye,

In man or in woman, but makes me
thus feel,

That the Demon of Humbug is burning
to steal

Humanity's Right, by acting a lie.

Dear Aunty, I know you will deem
this discourse,

Not exactly the thing for a girl of
my age—

And doubtless be somewhat amazed at
the force,

Of your dainty young niece in the
garb of a sage,

But, believe me, I realize Fashion's
mistake,

In turning her smiles from the labor-
ing poor,
Whilst the wealthy and proud by the
hand she will take,
And, forgetting their sins, lead them
in at her door;
Where a calm rosy sweetness steals into
the heart,
And bloom and soft murmurs wreathe
garlands of bliss,
Where poesy's charm, and the painter's
soft art, [abyss!
Combine to cast beauty o'er Fashion's
Where the passions are roused by this
dream of delight,
• Aad a thrill of temptation burns into
the heart,
While the senses of Reason, and Honor,
and Right,
In a flood of treacherous pleasure
depart!

Now I've done for to-night, dearest
Aunty, and close

With a hope that you'll answer this
gossiping letter,

By something whose wisdom will give
me repose,

And make us poor mortals seem wiser
and better.

Love in your days, dear Aunty, was
somewhat the same,

Though a little platonic—and rather too
tame ;

But this present feature from Cupid's
abode,

Keeps up with the standard of " LOVE,
A LA MODE." •

AUNTY'S REPLY

TO THE

FAIR MARY ANNE.



MY DEAR MARY ANNE, with a thrill of
delight,
I read your most welcome epistle last
night,
For there I could see that the lessons
I taught
You in youth had not faded beneath
Fashion's glow ;
That your mind was not made up of
tinsel or show,
And against the world's follies had
skillfully fought !

You cannot imagine my sorrow to hear,
The false step which your friend Miss
Lavish has taken---
A step which most bitter regret will
awaken,
And one which true virtue would
fearlessly spurn.

To be sure, the temptation, to one
whose young heart,

Was weak from its very simplicity—
came

In the form of staunch manhood, and
acted a part

With the hypocrite's smile and in
friendship's pure name!

Still, in days of fast stories---fast mothers
and schools,

Amongst girls of eighteen there are very
few fools;

And I'm prone to believe that a maiden
with sense

To make love to a man---is her own
best defence---

If she wishes to baffle his skill and
his art,

The battery lies in her brain and her
heart.

Alas, for the world! Nature's model
has gone,

And the Children of Fashion create a
new dawn!

The science of flirting is driven to grief,
And sentiment utters a sigh for relief;
The Poets---those blazing supporters of
youth---

Are robbed of each fiery sentence to
give

Expression to feelings dictated, forsooth,
By a whimsical passion, whose strength
cannot live,

But exists on the beauties and sweets
which environ

The thoughts of proud songsters like
Shelley or Byron!

A wonderful virtue exists in the form

Of her Majesty's servant's;—the ladies
believe

Them the pink of perfection—while each
one is keen

To net the sharp victim, who laughs in
his sleeve
At the racy young maiden, grown reckless
- and bold
In order to share his position and gold !
And I declare, for everyone must know't,
That all this virtue lies in the red
coat.
His simplest "hum" or "haw" may
echo flat,
The Queen's commission counteracts all
that;
And half the daughters of a Christian
nation,
Forget the fool whilst worshipping his
station ;
Beaming their honey'd smiles — enough
to kill a
Common man—but not a trained Gorilla !
Now dear Mary Anne you must not
detest

Philosophical discourse—for, doing my
best

I cannot resist putting in a sly word,
Whilst viewing the “downfall of Fashion’s
gay bird.”

I was once, like yourself, very foolish
and giddy,

For flirting or dancing—eternally ready;
And, indeed, to be candid, was rather
too partial,

To anything scarlet—I mean anything
martial.

However, I learned in the days of my
youth,

To be guided by principle, justice, and
truth,

And — keenly observing — I declare, to
my knowledge,

There are men cooped in Barracks who
should be at College.

Commissioned to shew how an army’s
arrayed—

Pomaded and plastered for Ball-room
parade ;

Full of soft nonsense—devoid of mean-
ing,

And spouting the English which sadly
needs cleaning.

In short, they imagine their fame so
prodigious,

That they would not for worlds be con-
sidered religious :

Their creed is summed up in a few
words like these—

“Who flatters the highest is surest to
please ;”

And she who can gabble—wear hoops
and a bodice,

Is made³ to esteem herself more than a
goddess,

And this by a spooney young sprig
out of place,

Whose fortune consists of the brass on
his face !

Yet this bitter-sweet model, 'twixt hum,
haw, and stutter,
By his simplest advances makes woman's
heart flutter!

Take for instance the life of a modernized
Miss,

Whose course appears one of unparalleled
bliss;

Her mind stored with gems from the words
of romance,

Whilst "exclusive circles" these rare gifts
enhance—;

The rules of "her own sex" are strict in
their aim

Of teaching the worth of position and
fame;

In leading the mind to a climax of pride,
And seething the heart with a burning
desire—

Till virtuous love is no longer the guide—

And the victim's ambition mounts higher
and higher,
While the beams of pure womanhood
meekly expire.

'Tis true that the "Upper-ten" open the
way

To sins which the poor are unable to
know,

That their hearts are too prone passion's
voice to obey

And that souls are seduced by their
splendor and show ;

But withal this hard-hitting at Fashion's
gay throng

There is one class of people who seldom
receive

A proper reward for the sins and the wrong
Which their vile impositions so often
achieve :—

I allude to the class which the varying
wheel

Of fortune has lifted above their estate—
Who too stupid to know, and too selfish to
feel,

Are seduced by the charms of position
and state,

As they come from the garret, or out of the
hovel,

To be fann'd whilst they read the last sen-
sation novel,

To tread on soft carpets and loll at their
ease,

And gratify fancies too num'rous to please.
For as pride and ambition grow daily im-
mense

They'd rule all the world—if endowed
with the sense ;

And seek by attractions of money and
dress

To win the soft solace of Fashion's caress !
With envious passions traducing the one

Whose form does not bask in "Society's"
sun ;

And first to lend cunning and crafty sup-
port

To the slanderous tale and the libellous
sneer,

If breathed by the "circles" whose pleas-
ures they court,

With an eloquent smile and a cowardly
fear.

By these the fair banners of union and
trust

Are dragged to the earth till they trail in
the dust,

And the virulent poison of worldly deceit
Proves Honor a shadow and Fashion a
cheat.

But my pen is not trimmed for much writing to night,
Though the heavens are brilliant with beauty and light;
And Nature still breathes of a calmer abode
When the soul passes safely o'er life's thorny road:
And the langour, and sorrow, and trouble of earth
Glide calmly through death to a purified birth,
Where the flutter of fashion, and scandal and sin
Are unknown to the spirits who enter therein.
And the burning temptation and passionate wiles
Of earth pass away in contentment and smiles;
Not a vision of terror glides over the heart,
Not a dream which could mar the perfection of love,

Not a feature is glossed by the radiance
of Art—

All is Nature, as viewed in the regions
above !

There the tinsel, and humbug, and power
of gold,

And the cant of the hypocrite fail in
their aim ;

No position by trickster's is bartered or
sold,

But the rich and the poor are considered
the same :

And the weight of the heart and the truth
of the soul

Are passports to Heaven's most purified
goal ;

And the cant of the world and the scanda-
lous lie

In throes of deep anguish and misery die.

Whilst those who have turned from the
virtuous course

Of life, are left wailing in bitter remorse,
And a mandate from Heaven can only
release

The Destroyer of Innocent Graces and
Peace !

And thus whilst we feel all humanity's
woes,

In the dim dreary midnight one kindly
beam glows ;

And the downfall of Fashion, and follies of
youth

Convince us of Heaven's most glorious
Truth—

That Happiness, Safety, and Pleasure are
found

By those whom the laurels of Virtue sur-
round :

God grant then that mortals may seek
the true road,

And shun the vile meshes of LOVE, A LA
MODE !



